

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A driver circuit constructed to output a differential signal according to an input data signal during a predetermined period indicated by an input identification signal, and be allowed to select between putting the output of the driver circuit in a high impedance state and outputting a predetermined differential signal not putting the output in a high impedance state during a period other than the predetermined period.

2. A driver circuit comprising:

a drive section for generating a differential signal according to an input signal and outputting the signal to an electric cable or an optical transceiver; and

a control section receiving a selection signal based on which the drive section selects to drive the electric cable or the optical transceiver, an identification signal for controlling the output of the drive section, and a data signal, for generating a signal based on the received signals and outputting the generated signal to the drive section,

wherein, during a predetermined period indicated by the identification signal, the control section controls the drive section to output the differential signal according to the data signal, and during a period other than the predetermined period, the control section controls the drive section to put

the output of the drive section in a high impedance state when the selection signal indicates selection of the electric cable, or output a predetermined differential signal, not putting the output in a high impedance state, when the  
5 selection signal indicates selection of the optical transceiver.

3. The driver circuit of Claim 2, wherein a terminator is connected to the output of the drive section, and  
10 the magnitude of a voltage at the terminator is equal to or less than a predetermined value when the output of the drive section is in the high impedance state.

4. The driver circuit of Claim 2, wherein the selection  
15 signal is fixed to a predetermined logic level.

5. The driver circuit of Claim 2, wherein the control section can designate the predetermined differential signal when the selection signal indicates selection of the optical  
20 transceiver.

6. The driver circuit of Claim 2, further comprising an externally readable/writable register, wherein a signal generated based on information stored in the register is used  
25 as the selection signal.

7. The driver circuit of Claim 2, wherein the differential signal output from the drive section is provided with a predetermined common mode voltage, and

5 the driver circuit further comprises a judging section for comparing the common mode voltage with a predetermined reference voltage, and outputs the results to the control section as the selection signal.

10 8. A data communication device comprising:

the driver circuit of Claim 2;

a receiver circuit receiving a differential signal via an electric cable or an optical transceiver; and

15 a judging section for comparing a common mode voltage of the differential signal input into the receiver circuit with a predetermined reference voltage, and outputs the results to the control section as the selection signal.